862 842 see that conception has taken place before the child is weaned, they will hasten the ceremony. But they will be severely judged by the old people. Should the little one be sick, the husband will be scolded by the parents of the mother. They will say : "A djambeli ñwana," he has caused damage to the child! If a man forces his wife to transgress the law, she will run during the night to the hut of her husband's father to tell him. Actually this is a very rare occurrence. Children follow each other regularly at an interval of two and a half or three years, and seldom is the law transgressed which says : A mother must nurse her child during three "hoes," viz. three ploughing seasons.

B. CHILDHOOD

591 861 857 The infant, shiputja (Ro.) shihlangi (Dj.) is on the way to become a boy, mufana. During the first years of this period, which extends from the third to the fourteenth year, he stays with his grandparents. They do not give him much "education." He grows at Mother Nature's good pleasure. And as Nature is not always synonymous with morality, he sometimes commits bad actions. Sometimes also, fearing chastisement for a particularly wicked deed, he flees from the kraal of the grandparents and goes home, where the paternal hand will hold him a little more firmly. But the father does not bother much with these little boys and they enjoy an immense amount of liberty. These years are perhaps the happiest of their whole life. They spend their time in the following occupations : herding the goats, stealing, catching game, learning the science of the velt, playing.

1) Herding the goats.

231 Just as the Kaffir corn is the old Thonga cereal which is used alone in the rites, so the goat is the domestic animal par excellence, no doubt the first which the tribe knew and that which is always employed in the sacrifices. Goats are very common ; everybody

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857

possesses one or two. They are kept together in one of the villages and the sons of the master of the village or of the other proprietors must tend them. They "stay with the goats" (tjhama timbutin) till their tenth or eleventh year and afterwards they are promoted to the care of the oxen, supposing there are oxen in the village.

The young goatherds, with hardly anything on—a meagre

Photo. H.-A. Junod.

Boys herding goats on the Shilevane plain
(In the background, the Mananwiri mountain).

belt of tails or bits of skin hanging from their loins, sometimes only in front, nothing behind,—go to the velt playing on their little trumpets, made of a bone or a reed. They pass by the gardens, and the goats look with one eye at the green mealies, the fresh leaves of the sweet potatoes which are not protected by stone walls, (there is hardly a stone all over the Thonga country) nor by barbed wire fences. But the boys are on the watch and

231 "cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away
857 from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where
867 nothing but hard Gramineae grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching ; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back ; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of
857 them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him : "Fakisa !" He must answer : "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) Stealing.

685 What were they doing when the goats escaped ? They had
857 probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it.. Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

when he has brought his

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second wife, he will build for her also a hut of the same type. But this second hut, the third, and the fourth which may come afterwards, will not be erected in a straight row like a street. They will form an arc, which will be prolonged so as to constitute first a semi-circle and then a complete circle, if a sufficient number of buildings are added. This is the ideal of the black man, to

Phot. H. Grau

Ndjakandjaka, a headman of Spelonken, with his men.

become the lord and master of a complete circular village. Most of the men do not realise this ideal. Three or four huts, a wretched quarter of a circle is all that they attain to! Some, better armed for the struggle of life, or more favoured by circumstances, succeed in closing their circle. Their cattle, for which they have also built a circular enclosure right in the middle of the square of the village, multiply and are not carried off by peripneumonia and hematuria,

765 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of
783 *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning
516 passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis.
783 The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a
302 purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling,
783 corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in
177 the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles
231 a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand
783 it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu
834 mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

E. THE LOBOLA CUSTOM.

1. *The History of the Custom. How it is practised.*

4/36 583 439 As far back as Natives can remember, lobola has always been practised. First it consisted of *mats* and *baskets*, in those remote times when white people had not yet made their appearance. *Large iron rings* were procured by barter from sailors who anchored off the shore (see Part IV), and were employed for the purpose. Later on white traders settled in the country. *Beads* were bought from them (nkarara), especially large ones (mubatlwana). A chief used to lobola with ten handfuls of these, a subject with only five. Large *brass rings* were also used in old times. Two of them have been found lately in the Maputju country, and one came into my possession. It weighs more than two pounds. They were called *litlatla* and were very much sought after. One was enough to buy a wife.

4/36 583 *Oxen* have also been used for a very long time for lobola. Some say that they were the regular means of getting a wife in the 18th century. When Manukosi came, in 1820, he appropriated all the cattle, and the Thongas were obliged to use beads and hoes for that reason. At any rate the Nkunas, when they emigrated into the Transvaal in 1835, were paying lobolo in oxen. A father claimed ten for his daughter. The Pedis of the country claimed only two or three, and this was one of the reasons why 436 583 231 the two tribes did not intermarry. Strange to say, I never heard goats mentioned as having served for this purpose, though the goat is certainly the oldest domestic animal of the South African Bantus! Whatever may have been the objects first used, sooner or later oxen, live stock, became the usual means of lobola. This appears plainly in the technical expressions : to go out with a herd (ntlhambi), viz., to go to lobola,—to eat the oxen, viz., to accept a lobolo,—the woman of my oxen, viz., the one bought with the oxen given by me for my wife, etc.

231 436 583 177 The scarcity of oxen, probably caused by the wars with the Zulus, was no doubt the reason why they were replaced by hoes. *Hoes* were universally employed from 1840-1870, together with oxen, when available. Ten was the regular price for lobola. Later on fathers asked twenty, thirty, fifty. They were first of native make ; the Vendas of Spelonken, near the Iron Mountain, provided the whole tribe for a time with that heavy currency, until the Europeans saw that there was good business to be done by supplying them. (See Part IV). Portuguese traders of Delagoa Bay began to send Natives to Gaza with guns and powder to hunt elephants, and paid them in hoes : twenty, fifty, one hundred hoes for a tusk, according to its size.

436 177 583 464 But hoes have also been superseded by the universal power of the *pound sterling*. After the death of Manukosi (1858), early in the sixties of the last century, some Zulus came to Delagoa Bay from Natal, sent by Englishmen to hunt elephants in Gaza. They told the people of the country that money could be obtained in Pietermaritzburg (Umgundhlovo) by working, and the first Ba-Ronga went *ku berengen*, viz., to serve white people there. In 1870, in the year still called Daiman by the chroniclers of the tribe, many more went to Kimberley, especially from the Transvaal colonies of Thongas, and gold coin began to spread amongst the tribe with all its usefulness and all its dangers. It is now becoming more and more current, as from 50,000 to 70,000 Natives of the Thonga tribe are working in the Johannesburg mines. First of all £ 1 was worth ten hoes, and the lobolo money was fixed at £ 8 by the chiefs. But this price was soon considered insufficient by the parents. They wanted £ 10.10.0, ten guineas! They had already learned that, amongst cultivated people and in refined transactions, we talk of guineas and not of pounds! Later on it rose as high as £ 20 for an ordinary girl, £ 30 for a chief's daughter. The average round Lourenço Marques was £ 18 at the beginning of this century and in the Transvaal £ 25 (1). When a

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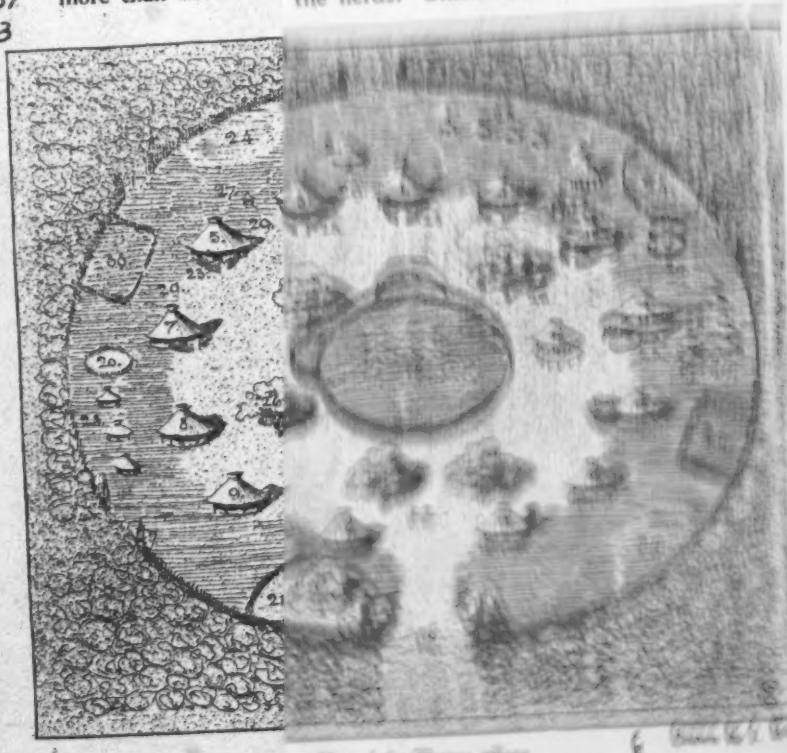
(1) There is a tendancy constantly to increase the amount of the lobolo. Nowadays it is nearer £ 30 than £ 20. In this connection I may mention the following fact. A man named Mpunzi had payed £ 28 for his wife, and the matter was looked on as concluded ; but later on his parents-in-law came to claim £ 2 more. Why? They had purchased a wife for their son and had obtained her for £ 28 ; it was all right so

l: Junod M-5 (1

or *shibala* (Dj.) (18), oxen. They are rar more than decimated



1. Hut of the headman's wife. 4. Of the third; 5. brother. 9. Wife of third br nephew. 13. Hut of a stran 17. Back gates. 18. Oxen k 22. Square of the village (hut trees of the hubo. 27. Hear

are reserved for t go to feed during conical roof supp

air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere else, behind the huts, for instance; or sometimes goats are tethered every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut: they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods; or at its base a broken pot which is the *xaudjelo*, the altar of the village. The *xaudjelo* is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *umnanti*, shade trees, under which the main people are fond of sitting.

So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the dwelling of the headman. As [illegible] from the ground with its the ones and as [illegible] the fourth. It is called *indlunkulu*. Some among men, also among a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and which is without doors. It is the headman's own hut, where people who are [illegible] of what is [illegible] kind of office of the interior of the village. The only door is and common the wives to come to that place. But the [illegible] enters by the side [illegible] one mouth on each, according to the customary custom.

Behind it and to it is usually a shed for the implements. It is built, like the goats' kraal, without plaited walls, and is usually also a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.

The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the side live the younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, the others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 consecutively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law (see page 329). It might be the hut of a stranger (probably who has asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, or to whom it is under the protection. This case is not frequent, but may occur, and is often to be received into the mystic unity of the community, the man will have to "blanda ritiele" (see page 179), together with all the other kinds of the kraal.

of desolation and of sorrow. (Remember Job and compare the rite of desolation and of sorrow (Remember Job and compare the rite of sorrow in sangha bowambo, page 194.) The store houses, *pailanda* (Ro.S. *pailoi* (D.S. 28) are close by and are built in various forms; little huts with reed walls, when intended for the mealies, with plastered walls, when built to contain ground nuts or sugho (*sudshi* (D.S.). They are sometimes placed on a palm-tree floor resting on short poles, or they are suspended to the boughs of a

The Mission at Kongo Mbiri (Northern)

[illegible] *Hut-brush* (Ro.S. 29) are to be found in the same region; sometimes they are placed even further in the forest on account of their attractive smell.

Within towns, heaps of ordinary stones, broken mortars and discarded pestles lie about behind the huts. If anyone wants to keep the place tidy, he can plant *pine apples* there (29), or *ebbeno*, or *Chilli pepper* (*kichiri*). Pumpkin plants often creep over all the disorder. Flowers of European origin are sometimes seen on the huts in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, especially "*carnations*", or the tropical *portulaca*. Vines have

When goats have damaged somebody's garden, there is no fine to pay. The shepherds are whipped and the matter is thus concluded. Should the father of the boys, however, take their part and protect them with his weapons, he will be summoned to the tribunal of the chief and have to pay a fine of £ 5 or two or three goats.

Thonga Natives who have but a few head of cattle, are accustomed to entrust them to the care of neighbours possessing a large herd, in order to spare themselves the trouble of finding herding boys. There are some laws regulating this matter. If the owner of the cow, or the pig, or the goat, gives money in advance to the master of the large herd, all the calves, pigs and kids, which may be born, belong to him. But if he has not paid anything, the master of the herd is entitled to choose one out of the first three; or he can take the third or fourth calf or pig. If it be a ram, one of the shillings will belong to the man who took care of it. Should the owner happen to know the true reason, there will be trouble hereafter. When he goes to take his cattle back, the master of the herd will keep one head for himself, and if a female animal, both will go to the chief, if most of the matter is important, if the animal in question, for instance, is of it.

If an ox accompanies with another man's herd for the master of the herd will inform the owner of other that he may go and inquire of the cause. Should he be living too far off, the ox will be taken on the back and the skin will be sent to the owner. Suppose the master of the herd pretends that the ox is dead, but the only one is still alive, and sell a skin to the owner to deceive him, it is a case of theft, which will be judged a such.

3) Criminal cases.

Adultery. One who punishes adultery very severely indeed, is that when the woman is married. The fine is a full tribute, five cows (?). Amongst the Ndaus if the accused man denies the guilt when questioned before the boys are consulted, as even the magicians who practise the "ukuma" divination. Then

good luck ; he will say : "My god has blessed me and shown me this gandjelo," and he is quite welcome to help himself to the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows : "Are you a bee, are you a butterfly to go and help yourself from a shikutja, which does not belong to you?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : "Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a fine, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste.

According to the Native idea, honey (bulombe) is also a drink. The prefix bu classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in order to collect it (taking from the hole in the trees of trees). They generally have some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thonga frequently secure honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Nwandwalala region (near Marikwele) I saw a Ronga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thonga do not at all despise the larvae ; are they not meat?

3) The Shimoyamoya and Shikokoyana drinks. The various kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thonga. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they attempted to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shimoyamoya*. Ishambana Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; their kinsmen of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; they then collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, in

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E. LIVE STOCK BREEDING.

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where they grow. Parts

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass. 231

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos. 231 552

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for 231 562 841 784

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

231 562 841 784 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187). Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 262 556 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 462 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

231 Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with sufficient care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; goats are however often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza.)

231 782 If the ox plays an important part in *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use entitles us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thongas, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantus.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is fastened to the wrist, the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach, and is used in connection with the invocation of the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162.)

136 231 643 782 *Sheep*, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI.) Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 194).

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu) ; these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny : it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets ; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs ; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut ; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the *tsu* rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

The dawn is called *mpundju*; then comes *thabela sana*, the 805
time when the rays of the sun (sana) are piercing ; *hisa ka sana*, 821
when they are burning ; *nhlekanhi*, the middle of the sky, or *shitakataka*, the maximum point of the heat ; then *ndjenga* (Dj.), or *lihungu* (Ro.), the afternoon, the time when the sun goes down (renga) ; *ku pela* or *ku hlwa*, when it reaches the horizon, and *mpimabayeni* (Dj.) the twilight, literally "the time when you do not easily recognize strangers coming to your village because it grows dark." These are the divisions of the day (siku). Then comes the night (busiku).

Eclipses do not seem to have ever much impressed the 821
imagination of the Thongas. At any rate, they never caused panics (Mboza). When, warned that an eclipse will take place, they see that, indeed, the sun or moon is "turning dark" (dji yentsha ntima), Natives are more struck with wonder at the supernatural knowledge of the White people, than with fear of the phenomenon itself.

I have already dealt with the notion of the *year*, (lembe, dji-ma), 806
which is very vague ; it begins at two different periods : that of 821
tilling and that of harvesting the first fruits (I, p. 396, II, p. 20). Thongas do not make any difference between a solar and a lunar year, their knowledge of months being very imperfect, as we shall shortly see.

Before leaving the source of light, I may add that the *light* 821
itself is called *ku bonekisa* (Ro.), or *ku bonakala* (Dj.), litt. that 822
which makes to appear. Of course Natives have no explanation to give of it. Moonlight is called by another name, viz. *ñweti*, connected with hweti, moon. *Colours* are very imperfectly perceived, at least if we are to base our judgment on the vocabulary. *Ntima* means both black and dark blue. *Libungu* is carmine, red, purple, and also yellow. Yellow is not perceived as a distinct colour. *Psuka* is the tinge of dawn, and of the rising sun. *Nkushe*, which means sea-weed, is applied to the *blue* sky ; *nkwalala* is grey, *lihlaza* (Ro.) is green, the green of grass in the spring, and the [231] ●
corresponding term in Djonga is *rilambyana*, that which makes dogs howl. Very green grass has this effect on Native dogs.

The *moon* (ñhweti (Dj.), hweti (Ro.) cl. yi-tin), was perhaps 821
personified in former times, as it bears the feminine suffix *eti*,